



THE PARTNERSHIP *for*  
DOWNTOWN ST. LOUIS

# Downtown *Next*



2020 Vision For Downtown St. Louis

Executive Summary

A vibrant, regional  
hub offering an  
authentic Downtown  
experience for  
residents, employees  
and visitors.

A Vision for Downtown

## Executive Summary

When the public/private initiative to revitalize Downtown culminated in the release of the Downtown Development Action Plan of 1999 (Downtown Now!), the product was a bold blueprint for how to reshape and activate the region's core. The Plan set forth specific goals in an attempt to ensure a focused path to success.

Today, the fruits of Downtown Now! can be seen through the more than \$4.5 billion in investment that has occurred in the 2.9 square mile area of Downtown since then, including: 130 new shops and restaurants; 12,000 residents -- living mostly in renovated historic buildings-- and 2,500 new hotel rooms. As the Plan's progress was assessed, it was clear there is much to celebrate, though there are still areas of needed improvement.

In late 2007, the Board of Directors for the Partnership for Downtown St. Louis looked at the growth over the last eight years, and determined that Downtown Now! served as an excellent catalyst and guide for Downtown's rejuvenation. The Board was encouraged by the progress, but agreed that it was time for Downtown to step up to the next level. At Mayor Slay's request, the Partnership accepted the challenge of updating the vision for Downtown with the intent of seizing the momentum of Downtown Now! and building upon its success.

Beginning in early 2009, the Partnership engaged the region in a dialogue about what it wanted to see in Downtown's future. Through public forums, an online survey, targeted meetings and key influencer interviews, the Partnership received comments from more than 1,100 people. This input brought about a clear consensus: keep up the momentum and take advantage of our assets and accomplishments. Overall, respondents indicated they wanted a "vibrant, regional hub offering an authentic Downtown experience for residents, employees and visitors."

"We don't want to be everything to everybody... but we can celebrate who we are and attract those individuals who enjoy being a part of the urban core."

— Influencer Interview



*The Partnership met with more than 30 organizations and solicited comments from approximately 1,100 people to create Downtown **Next**.*

"Imagine if you could come down to the Arch (the focus of St. Louis) and spend an entire day there rather than an hour."

— Survey Respondent

“Some of the ‘hot’ cities that attract young people are Austin and Portland. In reality, these cities are no better than St. Louis, but they have good public transit, and cyclists and pedestrians are separated from the autos.”

— Influencer Interview



*Washington Avenue reflects a \$17 million federal investment that prompted approximately \$1 billion in redevelopment.*

“Develop a business incubator and assistance center to encourage entrepreneurial growth and retention.”

— Forum participant

This Vision represents six common themes heard throughout the public engagement process. In its Downtown, the region wants:

- Connectivity
- Activity
- Density
- Valuing/marketing our assets and accomplishments
- Competitive Business Climate
- Inviting Environment

Based on these themes, workgroups with relevant experts were formed to develop specific strategies for implementation.

Of note, some of the strategies you will read are similar, if not identical to, some of the priorities outlined in *Downtown Now!*, reinforcing the importance of building on its success. The following reflects some of the highlights from the strategies for Vision implementation:

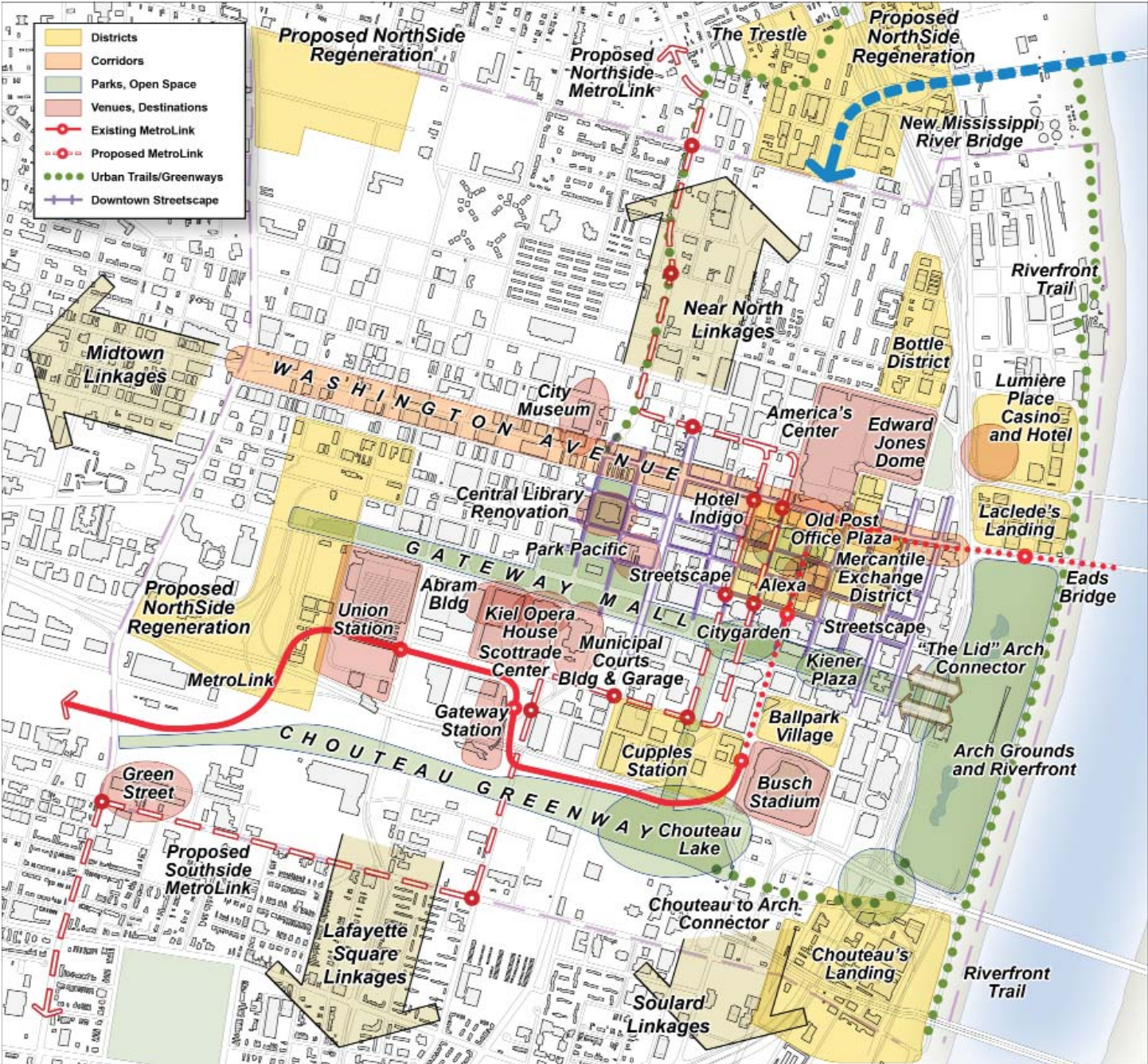
#### **Attracting Jobs: Building a Competitive Business Climate**

- Boost jobs by 20 percent to 105,000 employees in Downtown
- Create an environment and implement policies that attract small to midsize companies
- Compete strategically for large company relocations/expansions

#### **Creating an Inviting Environment**

- Reconnect Downtown with the Arch grounds both physically and psychologically
- Transform Gateway Mall, Downtown’s Central Park, into the region’s activity center and point of pride
- Implement streetscape enhancements to spread the success of Washington Avenue
- Create welcoming entryways, with a focus on highway ramps and Metro stops

Downtown Proposals -- 2010



*Citygarden, a \$30 million gift by the Gateway Foundation, marks the first major investment in the Gateway Mall in decades. It will serve as a catalyst for more improvements to Downtown's open space corridor.*



**Activating Downtown through Effective Programming**

- Provide incentives for residents, employees and visitors to explore Downtown through expanded marketing and new programming
- Support the rebirth of the Kiel Opera House to entice more cultural and arts anchors

**Making Downtown Accessible and Easy to Get Around**

- Strive for walkability by implementing accessible pedestrian and bike amenities and activating the street level
- Develop and promote a circulator that connects Downtown and links to nearby neighborhoods



“First.. we must develop the Arch Grounds and Riverfront. Almost every city that has a riverfront or waterfront has found a way to capitalize on the space.”

— Influencer Interview

“Position Downtown St. Louis as a national or global leader in greening and sustainability.”

— Forum Participant

*The \$35 million rehabilitation of the Old Post Office was identified as a pivotal piece of Downtown’s comeback in the Downtown Now! Plan.*

*Busch Stadium attracts more than 3.6 million visitors on an annual basis. Downtown Next hopes to provide additional reasons for people to stay Downtown.*



**“St. Louis is friendly, inexpensive and full of great stuff to do. I wish more lifetime area residents felt proud of our city.”**

— Survey Respondent

#### **Growing the Residential Population**

- Increase the population from 12,000 to 20,000 people living Downtown by 2020
- Become the most diverse, amenity-rich neighborhood in the region

#### **Bolstering Educational Resources**

- Recruit quality early childhood centers, elementary schools and high schools serving the Downtown residents and workforce population
- Expand the presence of higher education Downtown with an additional college or school from one of the region's universities

#### **Cultivating a Retail Critical Mass**

- Establish a retail hub in the core that offers a mix of “mainstream” shopping and regional and local businesses
- Develop a retail leasing plan that identifies appropriate strategies for various districts
- Bolster retail recruitment with additional sales and marketing resources

**Emphasizing Downtown's Unique Assets**

- Engage in an aggressive marketing campaign
- Build identities around Downtown's distinct neighborhoods that celebrate each district's history and cultivate individual communities

**Building a Planning and Policy Framework**

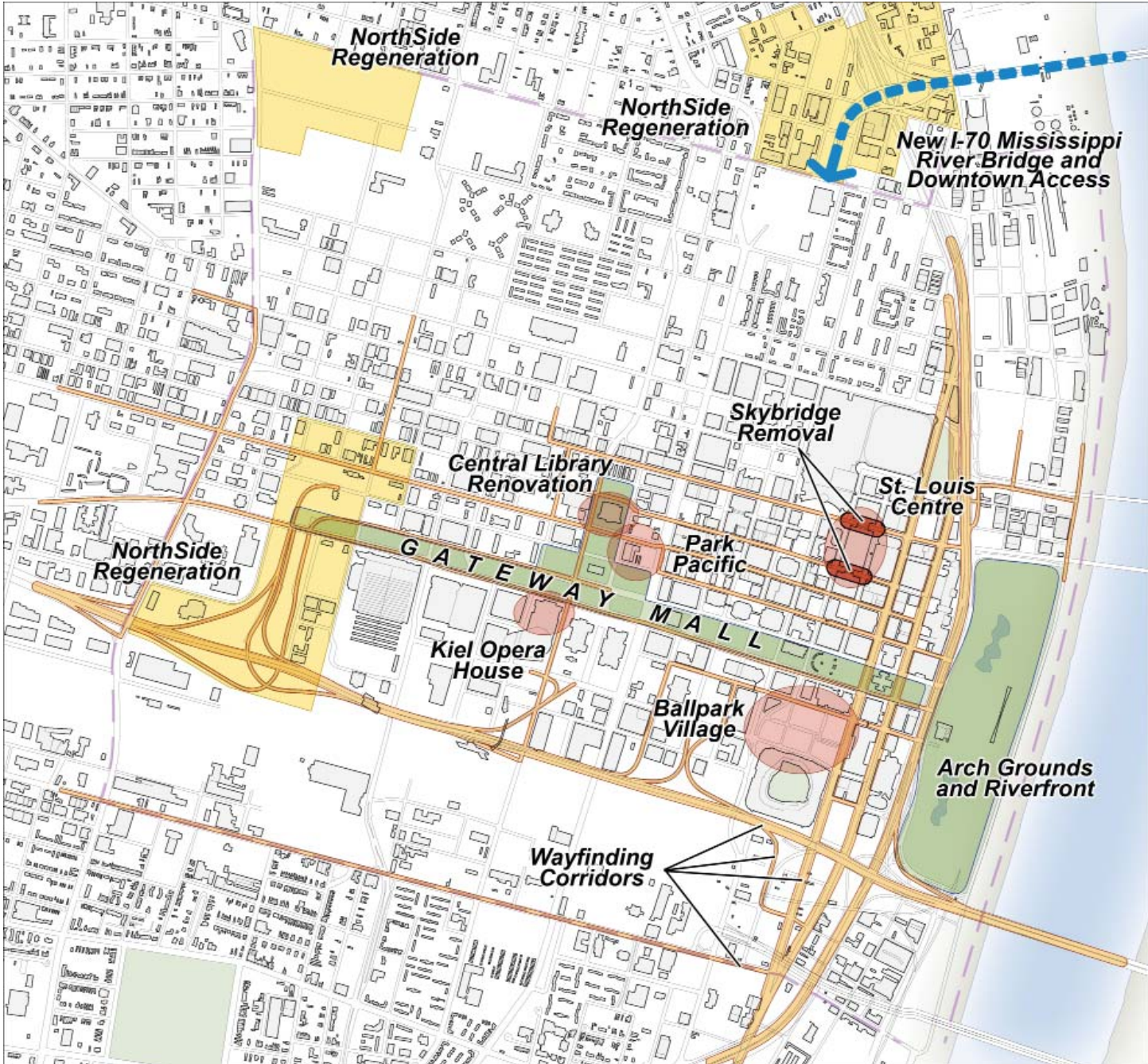
- Develop a strategic, flexible land use plan to prioritize and focus future development
- Position Downtown as the region's sustainability leader



“We must fill in the gaps. It’s like looking at someone with two front teeth missing. You concentrate on the appearance rather than the message.”

— Influencer Interview

Downtown St. Louis Immediate Opportunities



## On the Horizon

The success of the Downtown **Next** Vision is dependent upon teamwork. Based on the engagement process of Downtown **Next**, it is clear that the public will and desire for an updated vision is strong. A coalescence of public and private resources will be necessary to drive results. And while some objectives are longer term, and will require a constant and steady push, other projects and priorities are imminent. These immediate opportunities should be recognized for the momentum they can provide for the rest of the Vision. The following list is an indication of the great things that are on the verge of happening Downtown:

### Immediate Opportunities:

- Gateway Mall Activation
- Arch Grounds International Design Competition
- Ballpark Village
- Central Library Renovation
- Park Pacific Redevelopment
- Bike Master Plan
- Removal of Washington Avenue and Locust Street sky bridges
- Kiel Opera House
- St. Louis Centre Renovation
- Northside Regeneration
- Wayfinding

At this point in Downtown's development, the community could choose to wait until "the market picks up" or it could begin arming itself with the resources necessary to create change on its own. Downtown St. Louis has the opportunity to step up to the next level, but it will take the concerted effort of regional stakeholders.

“Washington Avenue shouldn’t be the only street with an enhanced streetscape design.”

— Influencer Interview



*Resources are in place to transform Gateway Mall into a corridor of activity that ties Downtown together.*

“Use the district to attract ethnically diverse immigrants into the interior of America’ for preferred job opportunities.”

— Forum Participant

## Implementation

The Partnership launches Downtown **Next** knowing it will be a challenge worthy of pursuing, in spite of the current economic environment. We must put measures in place to ensure that Downtown **Next** does not join other plans gathering dust on a bookshelf. Through a joint oversight committee with the City of St. Louis, the Partnership will track the progress of plan implementation to guarantee we stay on course. Using its committee structure, the Partnership will push Plan execution.



Together with the City, we will advocate for the realization of Downtown **Next**. We will pursue resources and opportunities that advance the Plan's implementation. Mayor Slay's initial request to the Partnership to update Downtown Now! demonstrates the City's commitment to the realization of this Plan. As the City seeks funds for capital improvements, we will provide the constant drum requesting resources for Downtown **Next** priorities. When the private sector wants to improve the business climate in the region, the Partnership's mantra will be "look to Downtown **Next**."

As the previous section indicates, there are many improvements that are on the cusp of implementation—some will be implemented by the Partnership *for* Downtown St. Louis while others are being advanced by the private sector or government. Regardless of who is advancing a priority within Downtown **Next**, the Partnership will be advocating for its realization.

## In the near-term...

The horizon for Downtown **Next** is ten years, or 2020. However, in 2014, the City of St. Louis will celebrate its 250th Anniversary. Since this is only four years away, this is an ideal near-term milestone by which to measure the initial success of this Plan. By that time, the New Mississippi River Bridge will be near completion and the Arch Grounds transformation will be well underway. These will provide major strides toward the vision of Downtown **Next**, while building the foundation on which we can pursue the remainder of our goals.

We believe in the future of Downtown. Working together we can realize the Downtown **Next** aspiration of “a vibrant, regional hub offering an authentic Downtown experience for residents, employees and visitors.”



## Acknowledgements

### City of St. Louis

Mayor Francis G. Slay

Board of Aldermen President Lewis Reed

Ald. April Ford Griffin, Ward 5

Ald. Kacie Star-Triplett, Ward 6

Ald. Phyllis Young, Ward 7

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- Building Owners and Managers Association
- City Affair Saint Louis
- City to River
- Downtown Rotary Club
- Downtown St. Louis Residents
- Focus St. Louis
- HOK Employees
- Metropolis
- North County, Inc.
- Partnership for Downtown St. Louis
- Southern Illinois Leadership Council
- St. Louis AIA
- St. Louis APA
- St. Louis Area Realtors
- St. Louis Bar Association
- St. Louis Development Corporation
- St. Louis ULI
- Saint Louis University
- Sustainable St. Louis
- University of Missouri St. Louis, Business School
- Washington University

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- Bill DeWitt, III, The St. Louis Cardinals
- Jim Woodcock, Fleishman Hillard
- Henry Voges, Jones Lang Lasalle
- Amos Harris, Brady Capital

### Downtown Now! Advisors

- W. Thomas Reeves, Pulaski Bank
- Peter Sortino, Danforth Foundation

## Acknowledgements

### Downtown *Next* Workgroups

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- Tom Shrout, CMT
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- Jessica Mefford Miller, Metro
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- Rob Wild, Washington University
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- Otis Williams, St. Louis Development Corporation

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- Tim McGowan, McGowan Brothers Development
- Judy Korn, Remax
- Penny Webb, HRI
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- Joe Zanola, Zanola Company

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- Zachary Boyers, US Bank CDC
- Rodney Crim, St. Louis Development Corporation
- Clark Davis, HOK
- Bill DeWitt III, The St. Louis Cardinals
- Dennis Flatness, Welsch, Flatness & Lutz, Inc.
- Al.Kent, PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLC
- Mark Mantovani, NSI
- Byron Marshall, St. Louis Union Station
- Jack Reis, EVS Realty Advisors
- Joe Schlafly, Stifel Nicolaus
- Steve Smith, The Lawrence Group
- Michael West, Ameren
- Pat Whitaker, Arcturis
- Douglas Yaeger, The Laclede Group

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- Gary Broome, St. Louis RCGA
- Matt Ceresia, St. Louis Business Journal
- Ivie Clay, St. Louis Development Corporation
- Chris Grus, Premier Realty Exclusive
- Mike Kennedy, Jr., KAI
- Don Meyer, St. Louis RCGA
- Tom Etling, Gateway Arch/Metro
- Jenny Nixon, Metro/Gateway Arch
- Brian Hall, St. Louis CVC
- Frances Percich, St. Louis Union Station
- Emily Kochan, Laclede's Landing
- Earline Bell, Downtown St. Louis Residents Association

Special Thanks To:

- Mark Vogl, HOK
- Vector Communications
- RCGA
- St. Louis Convention and Visitors Commission

THE PARTNERSHIP FOR DOWNTOWN ST. LOUIS SERVES AS  
THE CATALYST FOR CREATING AND PROMOTING A VIBRANT  
DOWNTOWN—A NATIONALLY CELEBRATED ASSET THAT  
ATTRACTS INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AT THE  
HUB OF OUR REGION.

THE PARTNERSHIP ALSO MANAGES THE DOWNTOWN ST.  
LOUIS COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (THE CID)  
THAT PROVIDES ENHANCED SERVICES TO MAKE DOWNTOWN  
ST. LOUIS A CLEANER, SAFER AND MORE VIBRANT PLACE.



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